

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

April 29, 2005

The Honorable Joe Knollenberg
Chairman
Subcommittee on TT/HUD
Committee on Appropriations
2349 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable John W. Olver
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on TT/HUD
Committee on Appropriations
1111 Longworth HOB
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Knollenberg and Ranking Member Olver:

As the Subcommittee considers the Fiscal Year 2006 (FY06) Transportation, Treasury, Housing and Urban Development Appropriations Act, we would like to express our strong support for fully funding the Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program.

Section 8 housing vouchers are critical to the ability of our communities to effectively secure safe, affordable housing for low-income families, senior citizens, and people with disabilities. These vouchers also provide struggling families the stability and foundation needed to maintain employment and achieve economic success.

The President recognized the importance of the Section 8 housing program in his FY06 Budget, and stated his desire to fully fund vouchers needing renewal. While many of us believe increased funding is necessary to reduce the long waiting lists that exist for the Housing Choice Voucher program, we all agree that we should provide at least the same level of funding as the President requested in his budget.

The FY06 Budget indicates that the Administration plans to present legislation to substantially alter this successful program. We appreciate that the report accompanying the FY05 VA-HUD appropriations bill recognized that "such changes fall outside the Committee's jurisdiction" and that reform proposals should be taken up by the authorizing committee instead. Indeed, the Financial Services Committee is currently engaged in a bipartisan effort to examine ways to improve the program. Therefore, we urge the Subcommittee to continue to defer to the authorizing committee with respect to programmatic changes to the voucher program.

Meanwhile, waiting lists for families seeking Section 8 assistance continue to grow. We hope you take into account the severity of the housing crisis we now face, and the importance of Section 8 vouchers in providing millions of families a safe and affordable place to live. Vouchers are also a linchpin of many local and state strategies to end chronic homelessness, which the President has made a key priority.

We, therefore, urge you to provide full funding for the Housing Choice Voucher program in the FY06 Transportation, Treasury, Housing and Urban Development Appropriations bill.

Sincerely,

Jerrold Nadler

Vladimir M. Milojkovic

Martin J. Scher

Charles Rangel

Chris Smith

Nancy Pelosi

Frank D. Lucas

Bob Filner

Tim Holden

Nancy L. Johnson

Chris Smith

Patrick J. Leahy

Tom Harkin

Alcee L. Hastings

Jim Oberstar

Chris V. Guter

Dan Claitor

John Conyers

Tom Lantos

Lennie Slaughter

nmz Zshoo

Al G Mady

Arthur Davis

~~RASymmons~~

Z. A. To Bunder

Al Lewis

or ~~inlay~~
Arthur High

Chas. B. Aditt

Joe Brown

W. A. Ozy

Alison E. Watson

Wm. Lacy Clay

Robert Welch

Tim Ryan

Pete Stark

Jed Strickland

Mike Ron

Harold Ford

Paul A. Jezab

Albert R. Upton

Michael H. Michael

Edith Bernice Johnson

Karna McIntosh

Neil Abernombie

Earl Pomeroy

Danny K. Davis

Leann L. Bessie

Brian Baird

Mrs Van Holler

Tom Chell

Phil English

Sven Johnson

Ron Kind

Henry Cuellar

Paul M. Gijbels

Viv Snyder

Ruben Emanuel

Sam Farr

Leb Seidling

Jetta Sauchy

Michael N. Castle

Tony B.

Tom Allen

Shelley Berkley
Jim Cairns

AKO-

David Scott

Madeline J. Bordallo

Mark Udall

Jim Pinstone

Jim Langheim

Ed Cox

Debbie Wasserman Schultz

Cond. C. Peltier

Mike Doyle
J. J. J.

AKBrough-

Frank Pallone, Jr.

Jim McGovern
D. Smith

Kirk Zansen

Carolyn McCarthy

John F. Tierney

Steve Israel

John J. L.

Dennis J. Kamenich

Hilda L. Solis

Michael W. Hosh

Lois Capron

Grace J. Napokhtans

Julia Cacon

Dana DeLotto

Bob L.

George Miller

The Helton.

Edward J. Marking

Derin Lee

Barbara Lee

Gregory W. Maher

Paul S. Miller

John Moore

Al Green

James

Howard L. Berman

Henry A. Wapner

William R. W. Murphy

Charles E. Wilder

Luille Royal-allard

Mayor R. Owen

Doris O. Matsui

Ch. Fark

Rosa L. J. Lamm

Richard Shea

Norm Richs

William Delab

Earl Blumenau

Carolyn B. Maloney

Bennie H. Hy

Shel Bur

St. Kishell

Bart Gordon

James H. Costello

Lynn C. Woolley

Bill Pasarell Jr

Sol G. G.

Corine Brown

Frank Hillman & Son

Wm. J. Rindley

Sam B.

N.

Stephan P. H. Jones

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Betty McCollum

David W.

Russ Holt

Kenneth B. Meier

John B. Shaw

John B. Shaw

Jim M. Bennett

Ellen Dauscher

John F. Shaw

Vanny Baldwin

Linda J. Jones

Harri

Erin L. Engle

Bernwood Beckett

Jim Moran

V. L. L. L.

Ben Cardin

Lane Evans

Eljan E. Tuning

Jim Mathews

Peter Fong

Robert Menard

Melvin L. Wall

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Ann Olin

James L. L.

Arnold M. Payne

Marty Mark

Benny Cratz

Bobby L. Rush

Gary L. Ackman

Nike McIntyre

Rubin Henojan

Mahe Wala

Robert Ash

J - Lend